

Sunflower Seeds



Wichita on the River at Night

Zoom meetings on Saturdays at 4:00 PM

**August 2022, Volume – 50, Issue # 8
Kansas Sunflower Mensa Newsletter**

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For questions concerning Seeds contact the Acting Editor through the American Mensa website or through the Facebook page. Contact other officers through the American Mensa website.

Chapter's Official Web Sites

<http://www.kansassunflower.us.mensa.org>

www.facebook.com/groups/773587949355460SunflowerSeeds

Submissions Guidelines

The Sunflower Seeds is published monthly. Submission deadline is the first of the month. Members in good standing may submit articles, puzzles, photography, etc. to the editor for publication. To submit an article for the newsletter send it to grandledge@hotmail.com

Articles should be submitted as a WORD document or Mac Pages document. The font should be Times New Roman 12 pt.

Why You Should Write For Seeds

This is your newsletter. You are talented and can make it better. More participation strengthens the group. People have told the editor that they like the Seeds. If you feel that way it is time to write.

The Pig-Out Column

Pig-outs are an excellent time to invite friends.



Recommendations from the Head Pig, Mike Dickson:

Check with Mike (316-871-3379) if you have suggestions or questions concerning the Pig-Outs.

September 3, 2022, 12:45pm

Bella Luna Café, 2132 N. Rock Rd., Wichita 316-634-0008

October 1, 2022, 12:45pm

N & J's Café & Bakery, 5600 E. Lincoln St., Wichita 316-681-3975

November 5, 2022, 12:45pm

YaYa's Euro Bistro, 8115 E. 21st St. North, Wichita 316-634-1000

Meeting Schedule

1st Saturday, September 3, 2022, 12:45pm

Bella Luna Café, 2132 N. Rock Rd., Wichita 316-634-0008

2nd Saturday, September 10, 2022, 2:00 pm - Program Meeting

Fairmont Coffee Company, 3815 E 17th St N, Wichita, KS

Speaker to be announced.

3rd Saturday, September 17, 2022, 11:00 am - Museum Meeting

Kansas Firefighters Museum, 1300 S Broadway, Wichita, KS 67211 316-264-5990

We may go to lunch after touring the museum.

4th Saturday, September 24, 2022, 7:00 pm

Barnes and Noble Bookstore Cafe, 1920 N Rock Road, Wichita, KS

Zoom Meetings Saturdays at 4:00 PM

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/72081034487?pwd=aWdKUStzbEVhNktjRzF0VEYxQTlSQ09>

Igor Ponomaryov is the Zoom coordinator. Contact him or the editor for Zoom information.

LocSec Corner

Bill Barnett

We need an editor. I am doing it now, but can't continue forever.

The group needs a proctor. Contact me or Dan Gollub if you are interested.

You are talented and can be a writer for Seeds. Send your articles, letters, comments, and pictures for Seeds.

Send your pictures to the editor along with their stories and they will be published here.

Heartland Mensa Region Seven

Beth Anne Demeter

It's post-Annual Gathering!!!

As I write this, I returned not too long ago from the 2022 Annual Gathering, held in Sparks, NV. And what a great time! There were friends – new and old, meetings, speakers, games, tournaments, food, restaurant outings, a bar crawl and a whole lot more. It's been a bit of a struggle to return to normal life and catch up on all the emails, but it was worth it!

If you weren't aware, I'm a Denver Mensa member. The September issue of our *Matrix* is dedicated to stories from Mensans who went to the AG. Passages come from long-standing volunteers who have attended countless AGs, along with those who just attended their first AG. Personally, this was more or less my tenth AG and I can say with confidence it was a good one. The speakers were well planned with compelling talks, funny anecdotes and topics that appealed to all. Games and tournaments required cunning and skill, but didn't overlap too much with anything else planned. And there was enough time left over for friends to skip out to the restaurant for a cocktail...and more.

Even though we're done with the AG, the fun isn't over yet! For instance, Denver Mensa is planning its first Regional Gathering – the Twin Owls RG – at the YMCA of the Rockies in Estes Park, Colorado, in late September. This will be an amazing time with all sorts of activities planned from cocktail tastings, hikes, scavenger hunts, Pretentious Meats and more! Additionally, Mid-America Mensa is planning to bring back its Cabin Fever RG in February 2023. While details are still being finalized, keep an eye on this one!

All this said, keep in mind Mensa is a great place to connect with those of like mind (or mind-power, at a minimum). The AG, RGs and other events are a great place to foster those connections!

Alan Watts' Zen Buddhism: Comparison to Some Other Authors, Religions, and Philosophical Viewpoints

by Gracie Ulrich

Prior to and roughly contemporaneous with Alan Watts' skyrocketing popularity as an interpreter of Buddhist philosophy in the West, other authors were tapping into a renaissance of mystical thinking as well. Amongst those was a bumper crop of motivational and business speakers including Dale Carnegie, Napoleon Hill, Ernest Holmes, Maxwell Maltz, Joseph Murphy, L. Ron Hubbard, Norman Vincent Peale, Og Mandino, Charlie Jones, Jose' Silva, Claude M. Bristol, and many others, including a very small and very popular anonymous booklet by RHJ, which is well worth a mention. All of these had in common the notions that each individual is much more than he or she might have ever imagined (which can imply an un-learning of negative mindsets and mental habits), that one can choose one's own reality, that this power comes from the almighty subconscious mind, and that there are techniques (including forms of meditational practice) for achieving this which can be mastered by anyone who wishes to put in the effort to learn this effortless method of creation via the imagination. In other words, they put the mystical teachings to practical use, often backing up assertions with Biblical scripture, thus teaching how to make magic (in the classical sense) out of these basic and potent principles.

These authors taught how to easily and effortlessly create the reality one really wishes for one's life. Along with that is the knowledge that one has already been creating one's own reality, and the question is whether or not one likes what he or she has already created. If not, then change it! It's that simple. Naturally, the psychologists (all Freudian-trained at that point in time) pretty

much blew a gasket, enraged that pop psychology should be taken seriously by anyone. Dire warnings were issued. But people who chose to create their own realities went blithely on their merry ways, just learning to become Themselves. Christians paid it little heed (unless they were using it themselves), and because authors had so often put a Christian spin to the principles using scriptural references, there was little to no backlash outside the psychological community. These are still often read today. Amway direct distributors, for example, still draw heavily from these authors as excellent motivational Christian resources.

References and Bibliography:

Carnegie, Dale. *How to win friends and influence people*. Simon & Shuster, New York, 1936 First Ed.

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Maltz, Maxwell. *Psycho-cybernetics: A new technique for using your subconscious power*. Prentice-Hall, New York, 1960.

Murphy, Joseph. *The power of your subconscious mind*. Prentice-Hall, New York, 1963.

Hubbard, L. Ron. *Dianetics: The modern science of mental health*. The Hubbard Association of Scientologists International, Inc. 1950.

Peale, Norman Vincent. *The power of positive thinking*. Prentice-Hall, New York, 1952.

Mandino, Og. *The greatest salesman in the world*. Frederick Fell Publishers, New York, 1968.

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Jones, Charlie. *Life is tremendous!* Tyndale House Publishers, Wheaton, Illinois, 1968.

Silva, Jose. *The Silva mind control method*. Simon & Shuster, New York, 1977.

Bristol Claude M. *The magic of believing*. Simon & Shuster, New York, 1948.

RHJ. *It works*. DeVorss Publications, 1926

KANSAS SUNFLOWER MENSA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Minutes of the 08/22/2022 Meeting conducted via Zoom at 7:00 pm.

Voting Board Members as of 08/22/2022:

Bill Barnett, President (Loc Sec)	Present
Igor Ponomarev, Assistant Loc Sec	Present
Gracie Ulrich, Publication Chair	Present
James Zongker, Member at Large	Absent
Dan Gollub, Membership Chair	Absent

The quorum requirement to have at least 3 Committee Members present was satisfied.

Agenda:

1. Appointing of the Nominating Committee members and of the Election Committee members.
2. Miscellaneous.

1. Bill Barnett opened the Meeting. Per Mensa Bylaws the same Members can comprise Election and Nominating Committee. No currently serving Board member can be on either Committee.

Igor Ponomarev moved to appoint the following persons to both Committees: George Hiss, Randy Hamilton and Klaus Trenary. George Hiss and Klaus Trenary were present at the Meeting and expressed their consent. A verbal consent had been obtained from Randy Hamilton prior to the Meeting. All 3 members of the Board present voted in favor; Motion passed.

2. The Board moved to approve the Minutes of the prior Meeting, and to approve the known public actions of individual board members carried out as a part of their duties. Motion was approved unanimously.

Meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Igor Ponomarev.

Maarieda The Book

Bill Barnett

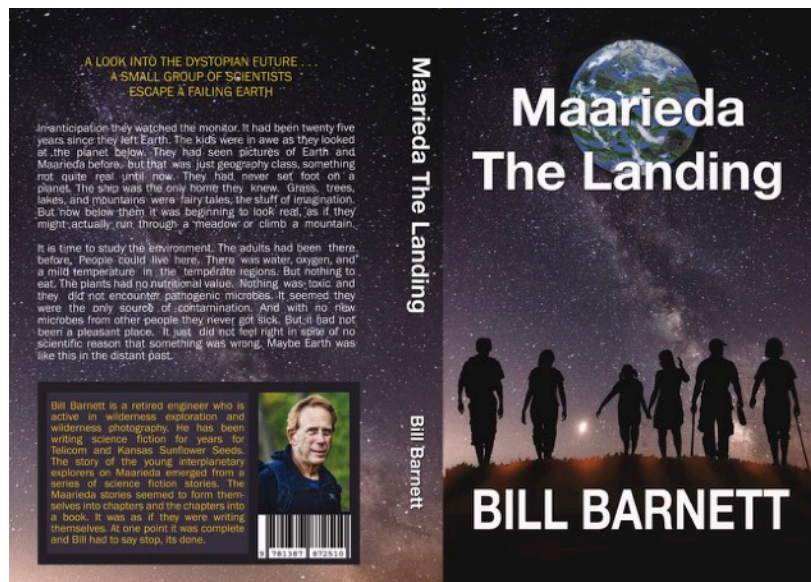
The short stories about Maarieda that were printed here are finished. The book is published. Copies are being printed.

Available at Watermark Books,

[https://www.lulu.com/shop/bill-barnett/maarieda-the-landing/paperback/product-5kgdy6.html?](https://www.lulu.com/shop/bill-barnett/maarieda-the-landing/paperback/product-5kgdy6.html?q=maarieda+the+landing&page=1&pageSize=4)

[q=maarieda+the+landing&page=1&pageSize=4](https://www.lulu.com/shop/bill-barnett/maarieda-the-landing/paperback/product-5kgdy6.html?q=maarieda+the+landing&page=1&pageSize=4)

and from Bill.



Number Fun That is Completely Useless in the Real World

As an amateur numberaholic I enjoy reading books on math and playing with primes, number series, all kinds of formulas, many many mathematical endeavors with automotive applications, and so forth. In Junior College I built my own G Meter for acceleration, deceleration and cornering. I also derived a formula to compute the Horsepower output of a given Drag Race Car's performance. This I checked against published information of performance and dynamometer tests plus weight numbers. Then I added a small fixed compensating factor to coordinate my results with the published data. Great fun.

In episode 10 of season 4 of "The Big Bang Theory" television program, Sheldon, a constant irritation, who many times proclaims his "truths" and never allows for rebuttal, stated the "best number" is 73. His reasoning: The number 73 is the 21st prime number. Its mirror (his words, I'd say transposition) 37 is the 12th prime, 21 is the product of 3 and 7. In binary 73 is a palindrome: 1001001.

He missed the facts that 3 and 7 are also primes and that 3 plus 7 equals our base ten number system.

While reading about infinite series which each required only the digit one, I started thinking about the number 2. 2 is MY favorite number. It is with the only even prime, the basis for binary, and the natural pairing of people and animals plus I have strung numerous twos together as a math puzzle/project. So far I have this series of formulas that all equal each other using only twos. An equals sign after each set of two twos and any and all other operands that I could think of:

$$2+2=2*2=2^2= -2^2= -2*-2=2!^2=2!*2=2!*2!=2!*2= -2!*-2!= -2!^2= -2!*-2$$

This amounts to 24 twos in a row. Such fun!

Do any other digits work? I don't know, but so far I doubt it.

Doubt: the cornerstone of science!! We have to start from somewhere; "Dubito ergo cogito, cogito ergo sum," Rene Descartes. I doubt therefore I think, I think therefore I exist. I infinitely prefer the translation of "sum" to "exist" as it presents a much more complete meaning than just using the ambiguous "am." So I snuck in some philosophy...

Care to play this useless game? Can you come up with any more twos that I missed?

As above, my self-imposed restrictions are: Use only one number. Use it only twice between equals signs. Use the standard order of operations.

It may be a single digit. Or perhaps using something larger than 9, which appears impossible to me. I have no clue even as to using a three, let alone some larger number.

Have fun and send your results to the Seeds.

Next time I shall share my "fun" with digital clocks and mathematical formulas.

All The Best,
Randy C Hamilton

Number Fun That is Completely Useless in the Real World, Part 2

Insomnia. Bummer. However, I created a fun (to me) numbers game to pass the time (pun, ha ha) while attempting to get to sleep by using the display of an imaginary digital clock. Imaginary because I don't have one that displays all four digits unless it needs to. My pickup's clock will do a 24 hour display, but not all four digits all of the time. Therefore my subject clock is imaginary: a 24 hour digital display with four digits appearing at all times.

Given 60 minutes per hour and our 24 hour day, we have 1,440 different displays available. My game amounts to using one equals sign and deriving a formula using each of the 1,440 displays. Other operands are your choice. 0000, midnight, is quite easy And has many possible solutions: $0*0*0=0$ for one. 1111 also is child's play. 0238 was fun, and a long time coming. $02=$ cube root of 8. Just an equals sign and a 3 in the radical sign. Rather simple after the fact, kind of like gravity (I do not sit under apple trees).

Anyhow, you can see how exciting my life is (yawn) and so I lay there creating formulas. I hit a few snags and so I wrote down all 1,440 possible displays on 24 sheets of accounting paper and worked on this project starting about January 2019 for over three years. I got up to 1,414 solutions with one or more formulas each and solicited some assistance. I have now gotten to 1,430. Ten have defeated me. Bummer again.

Operands that I have utilized: plus sign, minus sign, divided into symbol, divided by symbols, multiplication sign, radicals, powers (^), decimals, brackets, factorial sign, cosine, sine, and tangent.

If you have the inclination, go for it. I may be persuaded to list my ten problem children if requested (bribed?). Have fun and send your results to the Seeds.

All The Best,
Randy C Hamilton

The Enchanted Forest - A Short Story



Leon and Morrighan were traveling through the Golden Earth Woods. Leon liked to visit Earth because it was so different from the fairy forest where he lived. Leon met the great she wolf, Morrighan, a couple of years before. She was a loner, not traveling with a pack and enjoyed his company. He remembered back to the time he first met Morrighan. While sleeping in the forest one night he heard Morrighan's thoughts and how lonely she was. He found her and fed her fairy food and in time she could talk to him in thoughts too. There was no way to do the whole fairy initiation for a wolf, and it was forbidden anyway.

What are you questing for? Morrighan asked in thought. *It's obvious that you're questing for something, but you have never said what it is. You come here for these lovely walks and you're good company, but please dear, tell me.*

If only I knew, Leon answered in thought. *I have done the Moon Dance six times and don't know. The first time I received a quest, but I don't know what it is. I'm questing for a quest. Does that make any sense?*

Then we are questing for a quest, the wise she wolf said and continued in silence for some time. They found a meadow and slept under the stars.

When the sun arose they continued their journey with no idea where they were going, except that fate would show them. After some time Morrighan began to think to Leon. *You're*

becoming lonely too. Its time for you to find yourself a mate.

There's no one, Leon thought back to Morrighan. I've tried. It's hopeless.

There are hundreds of beautiful fairy girls, Morrighan thought to Leon. You could have your pick, even have seven, if you want. That's a large pack of humans and you would be happy.

But none of them is right for me, Leon thought. They don't accept you either, and you're my best friend.

"You must dream on it, the wise she wolf said. I'll help you hunt. I'll search my world. Maybe there's a woman for you here. The answer is in the dreamscape. You make mating so complicated. You fairies are in heat 24-7-365 and you still can't find someone. Almost as bad as a human. And human are barely successful. It isn't that complicated.

Leon had no response for his friend.

When it was dark they found a meadow with soft grass and fell asleep for the night. In the dream world Morrighan went on the hunt with Leon just behind her. They traveled for hundreds of kilometers without feeling tired.

Lot's of people here, but none of them is right, Leon thought.

We'll ask the ravens, Morrighan thought. Their rave is just another klick ahead. Soon they entered a meadow and were surrounded by ravens.

"What do you ask?" the matriarch raven asked Leon, knowing that he was a fairy and would understand.

"I cannot find a lady companion," Leon replied. "There are beautiful fairy girls in my forest, but there is none who is right for me. And they don't like my friend Morrighan, at least they don't want her around all the time."

"Have you considered looking here?" the wise old matriarch raven asked Leon.

"My good friend, Morrighan, has advised me to look here, but I don't know how," Leon said.

"We'll find you a lover in the dreamscape," the matriarch replied. "Tomorrow come back and we'll talk."

"Thank you kind lady," Leon said, and left. Morrighan and Leon continued traveling the dreamscape forest paths until dawn. *It'll never work, Leon thought.*

Morrighan and Leon woke as the sun rose. A raven was sitting there in front of them on a rock and thought to them, *Take the path to the left by the pond. Then turn right at the big rock. Keep going, don't stop.* She continued to give a long detailed description of the path they were to take.

The boy and wolf did as they were told and ran through the woods without a word. After two full days of running they lay down to sleep at bluelight and could see the lights of a large town on the horizon.

Maybe that's where we're going, Leon thought to Morrighan.

We'll see, Morrighan thought back.



In the dreamscape the raven continued giving them directions. At dawn the raven left. They had a vivid memory of what transpired in the dreamscape. They continued to travel the paths as the raven described. By noon they came upon a young man beset by bandits. The outlaws had big knives and were taking everything the young man had except the clothes off his back.

“STOP!” Leon shouted. “Leave him alone.”

“Hahahaha,” the bandits laughed in derision. “What are you gonna do about it?” one of them sneered.

“Stop you,” Leon replied with confidence.

“Yeah, you and what army?” the other sneered.

“Grrrrr,” Morrighan growled menacingly appearing out of nowhere on the side.

In shock at seeing the great she wolf the two bandits stumbled back dropping their knives and all the stolen goods. After a few steps backwards they turned and ran.

Not part of the quest, thought Leon. A speed bump sent by the adversity. We’re on the right path.

Soon they came to an overturned cart. “Vandals, terrorists,” complained an old man who was hauling his groceries home.

Leon righted the cart and returned the groceries to it. Morrighan let the old man pet her so the man could calm down.

“I never thought I would be saved by a wolf,” the old man said.

“We’re happy to help,” Leon replied.

Next they came upon a farm wagon that had been driven into a pond.

“Please help!” the farmer begged. “Oh God no, a wolf. Please don’t eat me.”

Morrighan calmly waded into the pond, grabbed the wagon harness in her mouth and pulled it out onto dry land. The two waved goodbye to the farmer and headed on down the path.

After another klick they came upon a sign that said, ‘Construction, Road Closed.’ They continued on the path ignoring the sign.

Then there was a sign that said, ‘Bridge Out.’ They continued on across the bridge that wasn’t out and soon were on the outskirts of a town.

A klick down the road there was a meadow where a young girl was meditating and beating a Sami drum in a slow methodical beat. A great he wolf was beside her. She looked up and said, “You finally came.”

Leon looked at her and studied her every feature. She had golden hair with faint strawberry highlights. She was tall, athletic, and had freckles, but was human in form and not a fairy. He thought, *That’s the girl from the dreamscape. She’s the most beautiful girl I ever saw.*

Of course she is, Morrighan thought back.

Thank you, the girl laughed in the thoughtscape.

The two wolves went to meet each other nose to nose, sniffed noses, smelled each other’s bodies up and down, sniffed butts, and then sat down beside each other to watch the human mating ritual.



The girl and Leon stood across the meadow from each other, circling each other, and studying each other thoughtfully.

You're not a fairy, but what are you? Leon asked in thoughts. *How'd you do that?*

We met in the dreamscape, the girl replied in thoughts. *I can travel the dreamscape and thoughtscape too. I don't have to be a fairy to do that. We've know each other a long time. Fairies are so slow.*

"What's your name?" Leon asked out loud.

"Álehtá," she replied. "I'm from northern Finland. My father is Swedish. I grew up in Sápmi."

"I'm Leon," he said. "This is Morrighan, my friend. I don't own her. She's free," pointing to the she wolf.

"This is Wallace," Álehtá said pointing to the he wolf. "Of course I don't own him. He's not a pet, he's my friend."

"How'd you get here?" Leon asked.

"Humans," Álehtá replied sounding frustrated. "They brought me here."

"If you're not a fairy and not a human, then what are you?" Leon asked.

"Human," Álehtá replied. "But we haven't lost touch with nature. I learned from my grandfather. He learned from his grandfather."

They continued to study each other circling the meadow across from each other.

"And the drum?" Leon asked.

"My grandfather's grandfather made it," Álehtá replied. "My grandfather gave it to me when I was 14."

"It has the Sami pictographs?" Leon asked.

"I'm Sami," Álehtá asked. "You understand them?"

"Yes," Leon said and he began to explain them to her. They both relaxed and sat down beside each other for a long talk. After the sun set she hugged him and said, "Not now," pushed him away and lay down to sleep. The four of them slept together under the stars.

You found your golden girl, Morrighan thought to Leon in the dreamscape. *Is this your quest?*

No, Leon thought back, *She's part of the journey. She's not the quest. But she's gold, solid gold, and that's good.*

Is it good or bad that she's solid gold and you found her? Morrighan thought to Leon. *A bag of gold would be much less trouble. You don't know what you're getting into. You were in a different dreamscape.*

She's good, Leon thought back. *I know it. I'm ready to go somewhere other than wandering aimlessly.*

You realize they're listening, Morrighan thought to Leon while laughing. *They heard everything you said.*

Álehtá and her wolf friend were laughing quietly at Leon and Morrighan.

"I don't care," Leon said out loud. "They can hear anything they want to anyway."



The next morning the four of them were up early watching the sun rise and eating fairy food.

“We have gardens like this one back home,” Álehtta said. “It’s not just food for fairies,”

“Please tell me about where you come from,” Leon asked Álehtta. “And how you travel the dreamscape.”

“Didn’t you read about it in library?” Álehtta asked. The wolves were watching with delight as the young couple were beginning to bond.

“How do you know so much about the fairy world if you’re not a fairy?” Leon asked.

“My grandfather taught me,” Álehtta replied. “Your tribe isn’t the only one with knowledge. We go by story tellers. It’s been that way forever.” Then she paused. “Where are you going?” she asked.

“I don’t know,” Leon replied. “Want to join us?”

“Thank you, I’d love to,” Álehtta replied.

“And where are you going?” Leon asked.

“I’ve been waiting for you,” Álehtta replied.

He’s on a quest, Morrighan thought to them. He doesn’t even know what he’s questing for. It’s a quest for a quest.

Splendid, thought Wallace.

“Sounds like a good plan,” Álehtta said joyfully. “The ravens left us for other business, it’s just us now. Which way?”

“The mountain, I guess,” Leon said pointing to the tallest peak in the distance. “Mountains are always good,”

The wolves looked at each other, then looked at the star crossed couple, and nodded approval.

Leon started toward the mountain and the others followed. The trail headed north for almost a day and then turned.

“We go here,” Leon said pointing across a prairie with a forest beyond.

“Are you sure that’s the way?” Álehtta asked.

“No, but the mountain’s that way,” Leon replied. “Do you have a better idea?”

“Not if we’re going to the mountain,” Álehtta replied. “I don’t think there’s a path to the top.”

“We’ll make one,” Leon said and then looked at the wolves.

Looks good to me, Wallace thought to them feeling like they would be lost, but the star crossed couple needed the adventure.

Agreed, Morrighan thought to them too, knowing how Wallace felt.

Leon started across the prairie looking for game trails. There were big rocks and thorny plants all over the prairie.

I can find the game trails, Morrighan thought to them. Follow me, and she took the lead. Soon they were running across the prairie on almost invisible game trails. By dark they were at a spring at the bottom of a large hill with a small meadow of soft green grass.

“Let’s stay here,” Leon said.

“Good choice,” Álehtta said. “There’s a garden nearby. follow me.” She led them through a small maze of miniature fir trees and they found the garden. “Look, there’s even wolf food,” and she pointed to plants that had meat like protein. They all began to eat and Álehtta ate a red mushroom and went into a trance.

“You need some fairy colostrum,” Leon said to Álehtta.



She barely responded and mumbled something about not having it in Sápmi.

“I’ll get you some,” Leon said, went back to the garden, and returned with a frozen bottle of cream colored liquid. “Drink this as soon as it thaws,” and he put the bottle between his thighs ignoring the cold.

The wolves watched, looking at each other, and enjoying the human, fairy entertainment. Álehtá barely looked up from her trance, and Leon watch in concern.

An hour later the bottle was unfrozen and Leon gave it to the girl. She drank it and fell asleep. She was in a dreamscape beyond where the other three could go. They surrounded her to keep her warm in the chilling night.

After the sun rose Álehtá woke up wondering where she was.

“We’re on the way to the mountain,” Leon reminded her.

“Oh, yeah, that’s right,” Álehtá said shaking her head to clear her mind.

“How do you feel?” Leon asked concerned.

“The magic potion cleared my head,” Álehtá replied.

“It’s not magic, it’s fairy milk,” Leon said. “You need it if you’re going to eat red mushrooms. It has antibodies for the mushrooms. That way you don’t get drunk.”

“Wow, yeah,” Álehtá said. “I knew that, but there’s no fairy milk anywhere.”

“Unless there’s fairies,” Leon said. “It was in a portal near the garden that stays frozen. Let’s eat breakfast and get going.”

After breakfast Wallace led them up game trails toward the mountain. The young couple were talking about everything. The wolves took turns playing alpha and leading, being an alpha male and an alpha female they didn’t have to fight for dominance.

By evening they were in the forested foothills of the mountain.

“Look, it stands alone,” Leon said as he looked at the peak. “The next mountains are barely in sight past the horizon. How tall is it?”

“5000 meters,” Álehtá replied. “I studied it. It’s where the dream said we were going. I saw it before we came here.”

“You knew all this?” Leon asked.

“No, I knew we were meeting a long time ago. I just found out where a few days ago,” Álehtá replied. “You need to listen to your dreams better.”

Leon didn’t have a reply for that.

Stop here, Wallace thought to them, there’s a spring and a garden. It’s the last garden and the last soft grassy area. After this we sleep on rocks and scavenge food.

They camped in the soft green grass and ate a feast of fairy food falling asleep under a full moon.

After they woke up in the morning Leon said, “We can do the peak today,” and he started leading up the rocky terrain. There were no more game trails. Soon there were meadows of alpine tundra between the rock formations. By noon they were on third class terrain. The wolves were as nimble as mountain goats. They passed a few white goats who were startled at the sight of the huge wolves, but the wolves ignored them and continued upward. By evening they were on fourth class terrain and the wolves were as sure footed as the people. Just after dark they summited on the small pointed peak. The top was pointed and had room for only one person. Each took turns standing in the top point and then they found a small area of flat ground nearby.

“Amazing,” Leon said.

“You said it,” Álehtá said. “We can see for a hundred clicks. This is the place,” and she sat down and began to meditate.

The wolves each gave one long howl and then sat watching the sky and the couple. Leon joined Álehtá in meditation. They both seemed to be in a trance as the almost full moon rose. By midnight they all curled up in a ball on the rocks and fell asleep.

The next morning they awoke to a frosty sunrise. “What’d you see?” Leon asked Álehtá.

“I saw your quest,” she replied. “You need to keep going. You’ll see it too.”

Without more conversation they started down on the fourth class terrain. By mid afternoon they were in a steep fairy forest where the ancient trees were no taller than they were. At dark they entered a deep dark forest with ancient enormous trees.

“Let’s stop here,” Álehtá said. “There’s nothing to eat. We have to fast. A day after tomorrow there’s food.”

“How do you know all this? Where to find food?” Leon asked.

“Our tribes are friends,” Álehtá replied.

They slept in the pitch black dark with empty stomachs as the almost full moon rose, but the moonlight barely reached the forest floor.

The next morning they were on their way at midmorning as the sunlight began to reach the forest floor. By evening they were in a valley crossing a small river. The river was fast flowing ice melt and 40 meters wide.

After crossing they were all four shaking the ice cold water off of them. The current had carried them a quarter click down stream. “Let’s make a fire here,” Álehtá said as they were trying to dry off on the other side of the river.

They dried their clothes by the fire and warmed up, still barely talking and the fast taking it’s hold on their bodies and minds. The wolves seemed impervious to the hardship. This night the sky started off full of stars and then the moon came out again.

In the morning they were up early and traveling.

“Do you know where we are?” Leon asked.

“Just past the horizon near that red spire there’s a portal,” Álehttá said. “It was in the dream. You lead from there. I can’t see portals, but you can. We all go there. It’s the back side of your world’s questing land.”

“The wolves can’t go there,” Leon said. “They never go there.”

“The dream said so,” Álehttá said. “No one is there, so they will be okay. We eat as much as we can tonight.”

“There’s a garden?” Leon asked.

“No, we scavenge.” Álehttá said. “And the wolves hunt.”

As dark approached they came upon an elderly stag who was suffering greatly from old age. The couple went on as the wolves relieved the stag of his misery and filled themselves. Álehttá showed Leon how to find wild roots and fruit. They stopped at a meadow that looked like a fairy meadow.

“The portal is there,” Leon said pointing to the next meadow. “We go there in the morning.”

They slept another night under the stars keeping each other warm as the temperature dropped to near freezing again.

When the sun began to warm them the four were up ready to go.

“Follow me,” Leon ordered and headed into the next meadow. Suddenly they were in another world with another sky. Álehttá and the wolves looked around in amazement. Even Leon was astonished at the view of the outback of the questing land.

“There’s food here,” Álehttá said. “It’s wild, but better.”

They all ate to their fill. As soon as their starved stomachs settled they headed to the next mountain. It seemed to be a twin of the last mountain.

“It’s good to have some food,” Álehttá said. “I never fasted that long or ran for that many miles before.”

“It’ll make you strong,” Wallace said.

“I agree,” Morrighan said.

The couple spent the whole day talking as they traveled to the next mountain, stopping for food each time they found wild food.

“This is what it used to be like, food everywhere, until it was destroyed,” Wallace said.

At nightfall they slept at the base of the mountain.

“It feels so much better now,” Álehttá said. “That was a hard trip on the other side.”

The wolves just looked at each other and grinned. Soon everyone was fast asleep under the twin moons.

“At bluelight Leon was up saying, “we need to get going. It’s going to be a long day.”

The wolves looked at each other and nodded.

The slope quickly went from second class to fifth class. The four were on the steep rock climb with the wolves still as nimble as mountain goats. They spent the whole day struggling up the mountain. At dark they summited. One moon was full, the other almost full.

“Wow, that’s an amazing sky,” Álehttá said. “It’s the dreamscape sky.”

“It is,” Leon said. “One of them.” They watched the stars together. Then Álehttá sat in Leon’s lap, pulled him close with her hands caressing his side, and kissed him with her enchanting warm lips. After a minute she pulled back, gasped, and said, “Not now,” with a look of desire and concern in her eyes.

Wallace looked at Morrighan and thought, *I wish you were in heat.*

You always think that, Morrighan thought back. The couple were too busy looking at each other to hear the wolves' thoughts.

"Let's meditate," Álehtá said. "It's time for that.

"Let's play," Leon said feeling disappointed.

"I can't now," Álehtá said. "Later, another day."

They all meditated until midnight and slept on the summit of the mountain.



When the warmth of the fairy sun hit them they started down the fifth class climb. It was steep to the bottom. They were exhausted when they reached the bottom and found a fairy garden full of food. They ate until they were stuffed and sat there resting and waiting for sunset.

"We go back across fairy land to another portal," Álehtá said. "You need to find it for us."

"What about the wolves?" Leon asked.

"You'll have to get special permission for them." Álehtá said.

They spent another night under the stars.

After a week of running cross country all day they reached a river and saw a fairy village on the other side.

After they ate dinner Leon looked at the village and wondered what was next.

Álehtá said, "We're to be a bridge between our worlds and bring them together."

"Yes, that's it! That's the quest!" Leon said joyfully.

"Finally, you saw it," Álehtá said looking at him with desire. Then she tackled him like a wildcat and shouted, "NOW!" The lovers embraced.

Wallace nudged Morrighan with a look of desire. She gave him a gentle growl and laughed. The wolves watched the fairy mating spectacle before them with Morrighan grinning and Wallace feeling frustrated.

At dawn the couple were rolling around like wildcats again with the wolves watching and feeling the same.

"You're now my best friend," Leon said to Álehtá.

WIFE!" Álehtá replied. "Remember, we're in fairy land and fairy law applies here."

"Yeah, sure," Leon was beginning to come to reality as to where he was. It had been like a dream. "When you're with child."

"No doubt. Today is my most fertile day," she replied with a big grin.

After a long discussion and breakfast Leon crossed the river to ask permission for the wolves to cross into fairy land. He explained everything they had experienced to the matriarch. She told him she would meet with the council and for him to come back in the morning. He crossed back to the other side of the river and told the others. They slept in the soft green grass alongside the river.

The next morning Leon crossed the river back to the fairy village. The matriarch was waiting for him.

“Welcome, we’re so glad to see you. Bring your friends for breakfast. We never had enchanted wolves here before. They’re different. You’ll need to talk to the queen about your mission. She’s in another village,” the matriarch said.

Leon went for his friends and the village had a breakfast feast waiting for them. After breakfast the matriarch showed them around the village. It was the first time for Álehtta and the wolves to see a fairy village.

When they visited the library all Álehtta could say was, “Wow! I wish I could stay here for ever and read.” Then they visited the toy factory and Álehtta wanted to stay for a day. She carved a small wheel and was told she did excellent. In the evening the fairies held another feast for them. Álehtta said, “I see why people never go back, but we have a mission. Leon found his quest and now he can do it.” At dark the four of them went into the forest to sleep.

After a week’s traveling they arrived at the queen’s village.

“There must be a splendid palace here,” Álehtta said. “I can’t wait to see it.”

Leon just chuckled to himself at her words.

When they arrived it looked like the other villages.

“Where’s the palace?” Álehtta asked a young fairy. She just looked at Álehtta with a puzzled look.

“Do you mean, where does the queen live?” the young fairy asked. “That way, turn right at the second street.”

Álehtta followed the directions and found an ordinary fairy cottage with a grandmother entertaining small children in her garden. “Do you know where the queen lives?” she asked the grandmother.

“That’s me,” the grandmother said. “How can I help you?”

“Uhh, ohh, we’re here to see you,” Álehtta said.

“You’re on the quest to be the ambassador?” the queen asked.

“Yes,” Leon said. “Glad to meet you. I think we met before.”

“We did,” the queen said. “Come in and sit down. I’ll get you some herbal tea and then we can talk.” Soon she came back with tea for everyone including the wolves. “Tell me about your adventure,” she said.

Leon and Álehtta told her the whole story in fine detail. The queen listened with patience and delight. They talked all day. At the end the queen said, “Come back in two days. I will talk with my council.” The four of them left to explore the area and return in two days.

When they returned the queen said, “We welcome you as ambassadors. Álehtta, you need to be appointed by your queen.”

That must be the shaman’s wife, Álehtta thought as quietly as she could. “Thank you,” she said. “Your hospitality is enchanting.”

The queen smiled and nodded. The couple left the village and made as many clicks as they could before nightfall. The wolves trotted easily behind them.

The next morning Leon said, “We need to talk. You didn’t tell me the whole story. If want to be my wife you need to tell me the rest of the story.”

Álehtta sat down and looked serious. “I guess I need to do that. I never tell the story.” She waited and was almost crying. Then she looked around the forest for some time to get her courage up. “The quest is a little scary, but fun. My story scares the hell out of me even now. But here goes. My family died of a toxic waste spill. We used to herd reindeer. It was a wonderful life.

I was sick, but survived. I was the only survivor. It took months to find my way back to other people. I almost starved. The authorities put me with my step grandmother. She wanted to control everything I did. She put me on drugs that made me calm and feel like I was trapped in a prison. Then she said I was trans and put me on more drugs. I felt like a caged animal, it only got worse. Then she scheduled surgery to make me into a boy. It was worse than a nightmare in a dreamscape gone inside out. I ran. I didn't know where I was or what I was. I hid in the woods. It was the only safe place. Wallace found me and helped me. I thought he was going to eat me and that would be my escape. I hoped he would eat me, but he didn't. He cared for me. He was the only person I could trust. One day I found the red mushrooms. My grandfather used them, but told me I was too young. They made me drunk as hell, but when I woke up my mind was better. Soon the other drugs had no effect. Now, I wander with my friend, Wallace. Finally, I have two more friends. Okay, that's my story. You're hiding a story too. I read it in your body language the day we met."

Leon talked, "Wow, that's a story. "I'm an orphan too. My dad was a human and my mom was a fairy. We lived in the Earth world and had a farm where we were selling produce in town. The drug cartel came to our farm and told my dad that they would kill him if he didn't grow their drugs. He was doing what they said and planning to run away but didn't know where he could take us. One day the feds came and started a gunfight. Everyone was killed. I had been playing in a stream and hid. After everyone left I went back to the house and saw that everyone was dead. I ran. It took forever to find a portal. A kindly old grandmother fairy showed me. The fairies raised me. One day I went back to seek revenge. Morrighan found me and convinced me to forget the revenge and let karma do its thing. I watched for months. The feds who killed my family got in another gunfight with the drug dealers. They killed each other to the last man. I've been wandering the forest ever since. And then I met you. You tricked me from the very start. All you did was trick me more and more."

Álehtá said, "You're a fairy and you're complaining about being tricked. Hahahaha, you're the original tricksters. All you do is trick people. You tricked me too." Leon couldn't help laughing out loud. He had been caught in his own schemes. "And you were getting drunk on mushrooms." The wolves were watching in delight at the fairy human spectacle.

After an hour of lover arguments Álehtá said, "Truce. I forgive you."

Leon said, "I forgive you too."

Then she tackled him like a wildcat. When they finally came up for air, trying to catch their breaths they looked at the wolves. "Look," Álehtá said. "Morrighan finally came into heat. Wallace will be happy."

"And Morrighan too," Leon said.

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